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(19) **United States**(12) **Patent Application Publication** (10) **Pub. No.: US 2005/0030166 A1****Kraus et al.**(43) **Pub. Date: Feb. 10, 2005**(54) **CONTROL ELEMENT OR SWITCHING  
ELEMENT FOR VEHICLES**(30) **Foreign Application Priority Data**

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**SIEMENS SCHWEIZ****I-44, INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY****ALBISRIEDERSTRASSE 245****ZURICH CH-8047 (CH)**(57) **ABSTRACT**(73) Assignee: **SIEMENS AKTIENGESELL-  
SCHAFT, MUNICH (DE)**(21) Appl. No.: **10/942,881**(22) Filed: **Sep. 17, 2004****Related U.S. Application Data**(63) Continuation of application No. PCT/DE03/00505,  
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Disclosed is a control element or switching element that is provided with elements which electrically or chemically respond to the sense of touch, for example in a steering wheel. The elements are used for supplying the driver who touches the elements with warnings and/or information about the state of the vehicle or traffic. Interactive functions can be connected thereto, by means of which replies by the driver can be detected and processed. The driver can consequently cause the information system of the vehicle to also represent the warning information in an optical manner, e.g. in corresponding control lights on the dashboard, at a desired time.

